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Background Advice and Guidance Concerning

NPIC R&D Efforts

1. Beginning with FY 1971 and extending through the mid-70's, R&D funding is not likely to exceed annual levels of [redacted] The impact of real-time satellite reconnaissance could increase this amount, but this is not certain.

2. The mix of NPIC R&D efforts should be in keeping with maintenance of austere facilities and processes and is as follows:

a. The foremost need will be to insure Center capacity to handle, process, copy, store, and retrieve imagery materials.

b. The next most important need is to find ways to make the imagery interpretation process more efficient, less costly and speedier while avoiding drudgery and tedium.

c. The third objective (and several cuts below the first two) is the development of equipment and procedures to extract maximum detail from imagery.

d. A fourth objective is to push state-of-the-art in fields directly related to imagery exploitation equipment and procedures.

3. The limits of available funds will cause us to focus primarily on projects and programs with high prospects for pay-off. Center programs, however, should be developed not only with an eye to funding limitations but with an eye on accomplishing objectives as well. In this respect, R&D requirements for others (CIA/ORD, DOD and service R&D elements) should be formulated and levied. We should assume that we cannot accomplish all we would like without supplementary work by others. Joint funding of Center R&D is not an unacceptable arrangement.

4. TSSG/DED should aim at becoming a hub of imaginative, innovative efforts to devise new techniques, equipment and procedures relating to the imagery exploitation process. All such efforts must be realistic and based upon likely needs of the operating elements of the Center. This will require

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improvement of dialogue and relationships between TSSG and other Center elements. There must be close and productive contact at all stages--early and late--of the development of proposals to be included in the Center's R&D program.

5. Pay-off of R&D is not at hand with the mere delivery of a contractor's report or a piece of equipment. Pay-off comes from application of the results to the tasks of the operating element. Hence, there remains the need to insure that operating elements are ready to receive and make use of advanced equipment. There is the need also to serve up data or findings from contractor studies in such manner that an operating element can take appropriate actions in accordance with the information. TSSG must assume a prime responsibility in providing results in such ways as to simplify and facilitate pay-off application.

6. Long-term programs and annual levels of effort may have their place in Center R&D work, but all such efforts should be probed and assessed frequently lest they become automatic renewals of unstructured work. We need not fear to terminate long-term efforts when the main task has been accomplished or when there is little prospect for good value to be returned. We should always have in hand an alternative to the long-term program (e.g., in Imagery Interpretation Research a case might be made for using the data obtained to date without further expensive refinement or with refinement in-house). We should always have in hand, also, follow-ons to long-term programs (e.g., there should be some type of important replacement for the automatic stereo scanner after its delivery or for automatic target recognition as future needs may dictate. These replacements need not be in the same family as the predecessor but we need to have a new program of importance replace an old one when it is completed.).

7. We need to do a much better job in describing the nature and objectives (and pay-off prospects -- good or bad) of our R&D program. Center paperwork, while perhaps as good or better than the paperwork of other Agency R&D components, is not good enough to insure understanding of the critical importance of our R&D efforts to the success of the Center's work in toto. We must improve our paper presentations while eliminating unnecessary paperwork. TSSG should identify paperwork it deems to be unnecessary and recommend its cessation and it should develop ways to improve the paperwork that is necessary.

/s/E. H. Knoche
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